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RETAIL PRICES AND BASIC WAGE RATES - JUNE QUARTER, 1964

CONSUMER PRICE INDEX

The Consumer Price Index measures quarterly, for each capital city separately, the variations in prices of commodities and services as affecting a high proportion of the expenditure of wage-earner households. Commodities and services included in the index are food, clothing, drapery, home ownership, rent of privately owned and government owned houses, fuel, light, furniture, household appliances and supplies, fares, motoring, tobacco, cigarettes, beer, cinema, radio and television licenses, newspapers, postal and telephone services, hairdressing, dry cleaning, and various other items.

The various commodities and services have been combined into groups and group indexes are available for Food, Clothing and Drapery, Housing, Household Supplies and Equipment, and Miscellaneous.

The indexes measure price movements in each city individually. They do not provide a comparison of the retail price level in any city with the retail price level of any other city. The base of the index for each capital city and for the weighted average, six capitals, is year 1952-53 = 100.0. Group indexes also have separate bases for each group.

In comparison with March quarter, 1964, the Brisbane Consumer Price Index for June quarter, 1964, increased by 0.8 per cent from 129.2 to 130.2. This percentage increase equalled the rise for the previous quarter which, at the time, was the highest quarterly increase for three years. The increase for the year ended June, 1964, was 1.8 per cent.

Higher food prices accounted for approximately four-fifths of the total quarterly increase in the All Groups index. The increase in the Food Groups index from 133.6 to 136.1 represented a rise of 1.9 per cent. The principal food items for which higher prices were recorded were potatoes, milk, meat, eggs, and onions.

The Clothing and Drapery Group index for the quarter rose from 117.7 to 118.4. This represented an increase of 0.6 per cent and was mainly due to increases in the prices of winter seasonal items.

The Housing Group index rose slightly from 145.2 to 145.4, an increase of 0.1 per cent.

An increase of 0.5 per cent was recorded for the Household Supplies and Equipment Group. The index number rose from 111.7 to 112.3, the rise being attributable to small increases for a number of household items.

A small decrease of 0.1 per cent was recorded for the Miscellaneous Group, the index moving from 135.4 to 135.3.

The Consumer Price Index increased in all capital cities from March quarter to June quarter, 1964. Percentage variations were as follows:- Adelaide, +1.3; Sydney, +1.0; Melbourne and Perth, +0.9; Brisbane, +0.8; and Hobart, +0.2. The weighted average of the six capital cities showed an increase of 1.0 per cent.

Since the base year, 1952-53, the rise in the retail price level has been greatest in Brisbane and smallest in Adelaide. Percentage increases from 1952-53 to June quarter, 1964, were as follows:- Brisbane, 30.2; Hobart, 30.1; Melbourne, 28.3; Sydney, 25.8; Perth, 25.3; and Adelaide, 25.1. The rise in the weighted average for the six State capital cities was 27.0 per cent. (It should be noted that these figures merely indicate rates of price rise in the separate cities, and do not represent in any way the relative absolute price levels in the different cities.)

COMMONWEALTH AND STATE BASIC WAGE RATES

Commonwealth and State basic wage rates are reviewed by the appropriate Industrial Authorities from time to time. The last variation made by the Commonwealth Conciliation and Arbitration Commission was an addition of £1 to the male basic wage, with corresponding adjustments to the female and juvenile rates, and operated from 19th June, 1964.

The Queensland Industrial Conciliation and Arbitration Act of 1961 abolished automatic quarterly reviews of the State basic wage, but the Industrial Commission was empowered to vary the wage after a general hearing on the applications of interested parties. Following such applications the Commission increased the basic wage by 4s. for males and 3s. for females as from 29th May, 1961; and by 2s. for males and 1s. 6d. for females as from 6th May, 1963. A further increase of 14s. for males and 10s. 6d. for females was granted from 13th July, 1964.

Current Commonwealth and State basic wage rates are shown in the following table.

Basic Wage Rates - State Capital Cities

Capital City	Commonwealth Basic Wage			State Basic Wage		
	Males	Females	Date of Operation	Males	Females	Date of Operation
	£ s. d.	£ s. d.		£ s. d.	£ s. d.	
Brisbane ..	14 10 0	10 17 6	19.6.64	15 0 0	11 5 0	13.7.64
Sydney ..	15 15 0	11 16 0	19.6.64	15 8 0	11 11 0	1.8.64a
Melbourne ..	15 7 0	11 10 0	19.6.64	15 7 0	11 10 0	June, 64b
Adelaide ..	15 3 0	11 7 0	19.6.64	15 3 0	11 7 0	22.6.64c
Perth ..	15 8 0	11 11 0	19.6.64	15 4 2	11 8 2	27.4.64
Hobart ..	15 14 0	11 15 6	19.6.64	15 14 0	11 15 6	June, 64b

a Legally payable from the first pay period commencing on or after this date. It has been announced that quarterly adjustments are to be abolished and the basic wage tied to that payable in Sydney under Commonwealth awards, such amendment to be retrospective to June, 1964.

b Most Wages Boards adopted the Commonwealth rate during June, 1964.

c From the first pay period commencing on or after the date shown.

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4th August, 1964

Table 1 - Consumer Price Index - Total and Group Indexes - Brisbane
(Year 1952-53 = 100.0)

Period			Food	Clothing and Drapery	Housing	Household Supplies and Equipment	Miscell- aneous	All Groups
Year -								
1954-55	..	..	104.1	101.3	104.7	102.5	102.0	102.9
1955-56	..	..	107.7	102.2	110.5	102.6	108.0	106.3
1956-57	..	..	111.5	104.7	118.4	106.5	118.9	112.0
1957-58	..	..	113.0	107.8	123.9	108.3	120.5	114.4
1958-59	..	..	119.8	109.4	128.4	109.0	123.6	118.2
1959-60	..	..	124.2	111.9	132.6	110.6	125.6	121.2
1960-61	..	..	130.4	115.1	137.6	111.3	129.5	125.4
1961-62	..	..	130.8	116.7	140.5	113.0	133.3	127.3
1962-63	..	..	129.8	117.0	144.0	112.8	134.4	127.7
1963-64	..	..	133.1	117.8	145.2	111.7	135.2	129.0
Quarter -								
1963 - June	..	..	130.2	117.0	144.5	112.9	134.4	127.9
September	..	..	131.5	117.4	145.1	111.2	135.2	128.4
December	..	..	131.0	117.6	145.0	111.5	135.0	128.2
1964 - March	..	..	133.6	117.7	145.2	111.7	135.4	129.2
June	..	..	136.1	118.4	145.4	112.3	135.3	130.2
Percentage Increase or Decrease (-) on Previous Quarter								
Quarter -								
1963 - June	..	..	-0.1	-	0.2	0.4	0.1	0.1
September	..	..	1.0	0.3	0.4	-1.5	0.6	0.4
December	..	..	-0.4	0.2	-0.1	0.3	-0.1	-0.2
1964 - March	..	..	2.0	0.1	0.1	0.2	0.3	0.8
June	..	..	1.9	0.6	0.1	0.5	-0.1	0.8

Table 2 - Consumer Price Index - State Capital Cities
(Year 1952-53 = 100.0 for Each City and for Six Capitals)

As the base for each city is 100.0, the indexes in the table below do not indicate relative price levels as between cities, but they may be used to compare relative price movements in the various cities.

Period			Sydney	Melbourne	Brisbane	Adelaide	Perth	Hobart	Weighted Average Six Capitals
Year -									
1954-55	..	..	102.3	102.0	102.9	103.5	105.2	104.9	102.6
1955-56	..	..	105.7	108.1	106.3	106.9	107.9	110.2	106.9
1956-57	..	..	112.9	114.0	112.0	111.1	112.9	116.9	113.1
1957-58	..	..	114.5	114.4	114.4	111.9	113.6	117.0	114.2
1958-59	..	..	115.3	116.6	118.2	114.5	114.7	118.7	116.0
1959-60	..	..	117.8	120.0	121.2	118.0	116.9	120.8	118.9
1960-61	..	..	122.1	125.9	125.4	122.9	121.2	127.5	123.8
1961-62	..	..	122.6	126.3	127.3	122.5	121.6	128.1	124.3
1962-63	..	..	123.2	126.2	127.7	122.1	122.2	128.0	124.5
1963-64	..	..	124.5	127.1	129.0	123.5	123.8	129.4	125.7
Quarter -									
1963 - June	..	..	123.7	126.4	127.9	122.5	122.8	128.2	124.9
September	..	..	123.7	126.7	128.4	122.8	122.7	128.8	125.1
December	..	..	123.9	126.4	128.2	122.7	123.1	129.0	125.0
1964 - March	..	..	124.6	127.1	129.2	123.5	124.2	129.8	125.8
June	..	..	125.8	128.3	130.2	125.1	125.3	130.1	127.0

